

good to help those who suffer in the world. And so the expectations, at least as far as I'm concerned, have been met here.

My expectations in the Middle East are to call all the respective parties to their responsibility to achieve peace, and to make it very clear that my country and I will put in as much time as necessary to achieve the vision of two states living side by side in peace.

I fully understand this is going to be a difficult process. I fully understand we need to work with our friends, such as France, to achieve the process. I know we won't make progress unless people assume their responsibilities. The first message is, I will dedicate the time and energy to move the process forward. And I think we'll make some progress. I know we're making progress.

[A question was asked and answered in French, and no translation was provided.]

Iraq and France-U.S. Relations

President Bush. Yes, and I want to thank President Chirac's support in the latest res-

olution in the United Nations. Listen, we must be frank, we went through a difficult period. I understand his position. He made it very clear to me in the very beginning. There was no question where Jacques Chirac stood, and I made it clear where I stood. And that's why I can say we've got good relations, because we're able to be very honest with each other.

But when it came time to focus on a free Iraq, a healthy Iraq, a prosperous Iraq, we're in agreement, and we will move together to ensure that the Iraqi people have now got the capacity to run their own country. It's going to take them time to get there. It's a difficult situation in Iraq. But we are committed to a free Iraq, and together we can make that happen more quickly than if we were still at odds on the issue.

Thank you, Jacques, appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. at the Hotel Royal.

Statement on the Detention of Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma June 2, 2003

I am deeply concerned by reports from Burma of the detention of Aung San Suu Kyi and members of her political party as well as reports that military authorities have closed her party headquarters in Rangoon. The military authorities should release Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters immediately and permit her party headquarters to re-open.

The situation in Burma has long been of concern to the United States. We have urged Burmese officials to release all polit-

ical prisoners and to offer their people a better way of life, a life offering freedom and economic progress. We welcomed the release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest more than a year ago. This step gave the military regime an opportunity to enter into a substantive dialog with Aung San Suu Kyi and all political groups to promote national reconciliation and democracy. This is still the only path to peace and prosperity for all of Burma's people.